

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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R 141030Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8979

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

CDR USSAG NKP

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3822

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, LA

SUBJECT: DEPUTIES APPEAL ASSEMBLY "FREEZE" AND
POLITICAL COUNCIL ROLLS ON

1. GROUP OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTIES HAVE DECIDED TO APPEAL LAST WEEK'S DECISION BY CABINET AND KING AGAINST OPENING ASSEMBLY MAY 11. MAJORITY OF 60 DEPUTIES REPORTEDLY MET MAY 12 AND DRAFTED A LETTER TO KING OUTLINING THEIR VIEWS ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND REQUESTING AN AUDIENCE WITH HIM. DELEGATION HEADED BY ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT PHOUI SANANIKONE AND RECENTLY-RETURNED VICE PRESIDENT CHAO SOPSAISANA, DELIVERED LETTER TO ROYAL RESIDENCE IN VIENTIANE YESTERDAY.

2. ONE OF THE LETTER SIGNERS, AMPHORNSAVATH VONGKOTRATTANA, TOLD NEWSMEN THAT PETITION TO KING CHARGES THAT NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT IS "STAGING A COUP" BY REFUSING TO CALL NEW SESSION OF ASSEMBLY. AMPHORNSAVATH, A YOUNG AND OUTSPOKEN DEPUTY FROM LUANG PRABANG, ALSO ACCUSED THE
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COALITION GOVERNMENT OF TRYING TO UNDERMINE THE ASSEMBLY

BY USING "STUDENT POWER" AND CONDEMNING IT AS THE "SANANIKONE ASSEMBLY".

3. IN PARALLEL DEVELOPMENT, 20 SURVIVING MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF 1974 MET ON CONSTITUTION DAY AT HOME OF ONE OF PRINCIPAL DRAFTERS OF CONSTITUTION, BONG SOUVANNAVONG. GROUP AFFIRMED CONTINUING VALUE OF CONSTITUTION AND POINTEDLY EMPHASIZED ARTICLE 43--WHICH STIPULATES THAT CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO MONARCHIAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT, REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF GOVERNMENT AND PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY AND EQUALITY ARE NOT SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT.

4. MEANWHILE, IN LUANG PRABANG, POLITICAL COUNCIL UNDER APPARENT TIGHT CONTROL OF PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG, IS MOVING SMARTLY AHEAD, MAKING "UNANIMOUS" DECISIONS. COUNCIL, ON APRIL 29, "UNANIMOUSLY" APPROVED COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS PROPOSED BY SOUPHANOUVONG AND THE LPF AND VIENTIANE SIDE VICE CHAIRMEN. ON MAY 9, THE COUNCIL "UNANIMOUSLY" APPROVED ITS TEMPORARY OPERATING REGULATIONS (32 ARTICLES). SOUPHANOUVONG HAS NOW INTRODUCED THE DRAFT OF A POLITICAL PROGRAM WHICH IS TO BE ADOPTED AND PRESENTED TO THE PGNU FOR IM-

PLEMENTATION. ACCORDING TO RADIO PATHET LAO, ALL THESE VARIOUS MOVES HAVE BEEN TAKEN WITH "REJOICING" IN AN

ATMOSPHERE OF "CORDIALITY AND UNDERSTANDING." AT THIS PACE, PGNU MAY SOON RECEIVE "UNANIMOUSLY" APPROVED POLITICAL PROGRAM.

5. LAST WEEK'S EVENTS CLEARLY POSE LONG-RANGE THREAT TO CONSTITUTION. LPF MOVED SWIFTLY TO EXPLOIT APPREHENSION WHICH THEY THEMSELVES CREATED, AND INDECISION OF THE VIENTIANE SIDE. LPF PROPAGANDA NOW ASSERTS THAT DECISION AGAINST ASSEMBLY SHOWS THAT CURRENT ERA BELONGS TO "THE MASSES" WHO DO NOT PERMIT "TRAITOROUS REACTIONARIES, LACKEYS OF U.S. IMPERIALISTS TO ACT AS THEY WISH." THE NEXT TEST MAY COME EARLIER THAN WE HAD EXPECTED IF THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL PROGRAM IS SOON TO BE PRESENTED TO THE CABINET.

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